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# Guard the Public School!

Lecture by Prof. MARTIN BUNGE.

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### A GREAT DANGER.

One of the greatest dangers that, at the present time, confront the free institutions of our republic is the systematic, persistent undermining of the democratic spirit of our citizens by the fight against our free public schools that is carried on cautiously but determinedly by the Catholic Hierarchy.

We do not intend to encroach on anybody's religious opinions. But we are aware of the difference of certain fixed ethical views from a set of men who under the pretext of teaching morals try to take a hold of all temporal institutions for selfish purposes only, who are willing to cripple the mind of future generations if they can thereby gain absolute control over them and theirs, who feast on ignorance and superstition, and therefore tend to uphold the progress of mankind in order that they may the longer rule over weak-minded people. Their main aim is to prepossess the minds of the young children; their motto: Give me any man till up to his tenth year, then I shall not care who teaches him ever afterward, he will be mine.

I therefore appeal to all upright persons regardless of political or religious creed, who love our free institutions, who are working for progress, who want more happiness, more purity, more manhood, to keep faithful watch over our free public schools.

### A SHORT REVIEW.

If we look over the history of human progress, over the thousands of years during which mankind has developed from low to ever higher stages of civilization, we at once observe that education was the most important factor in this evolution of culture. You will further see that all education can be divided into two different kinds of development of the human mind, one based on legends, dreams, old customs was merely an artificial drilling of the young to willing and obedient subjects of kings, aristocrats, plutocrats and priests; the other one based on the laws of nature, a developing of an ever higher type of men and women by improving and perfecting all the natural gifts of body and soul, aiming at the happiness of the individual and of society.

With the primitive man education was natural. It consisted merely of some suggestions given by the parent, otherwise it was a series of organic changes taking place all the time from infancy to maturity, modified more by the natural surroundings than by men.

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But when education developed it was led astray by certain sets of men who, taking advantage of ignorance and fear, systematically imposed upon the minds of the young, hypnotizing them into wrong conceptions of the universe, of the duties of life, into unnatural active and passive correlations with the cosmos.

Thus in China the final end of all education has been to accustom the young to certain manners and conventions which method results in an outward conduct without corresponding inner character. Everything there tends towards conservation of that which is holy from mere age. Cruel punishments undermine the self-consciousness and dignity. Instead of training the physique the crippling of the girls' feet is encouraged, the boys' physical developments lack the system, nothing is done to perfect the individual, all to serve the state, which is represented by the emperor and the mandarins.

In India the only aim of education has been to teach the dignity and superiority of the priest's class and make the lower classes patient, submissive, and satisfied with their lot. Resignation there is the highest virtue. Similar has been the education in Persia, Egypt and most of the other ancient and modern states.

A wonderful instance of exception offers Greece. The Greeks had myths and gods, but they had no priest-class. This is the reason that they developed to an unparalleled perfection in the short time of their independence. They trained body and mind equally, they set forth the first system of pedagogy that was based on an intelligent conception of natural laws. It is true their education was confined only to a few thousands, and contained many narrow views due to the small amount of information gathered at that time. But compared with all other nations, and considering their limits, they have given us an example worthy of imitation.

During all the centuries there have always been reactions against the dominant tendencies. Laotze in China, Buddha in India, and others. Thousands of men and women in all countries have constantly, perseverantly and faithfully reacted against the unnatural, artificial training of the young for the benefit of the few, and to these protesters all progress in civilization is due. But the history has not recorded their names, for records were kept for the benefit and under control of the ruling class; they have been persecuted, and at the best have been forgotten, but a close student of history observes their working in the development of culture and from the measures against them by the rulers. The parasites of society have managed to keep their influence floating on top. They have hailed the discovery of every new fact and every new principle, as an attack upon their system, upon church and aristocracy. So, every discoverer of a new idea, whether of facts of astronomy, or facts of physics, facts of anatomy and physiology, like the circulation of the blood or the dependence of soul life on the nerve and brain cells and their substance, especially upon the vital processes in certain cells of the cortex and



the outer layer of the brain. So have the discoveries in chemistry, psychology, biology, geology, or whatever science—as long as it were facts instead of old musty dreams—they have been denounced as crimes against the dogmas of a priesthood; the discoverers of these facts—facts whose knowledge set the world thinking, who revolutionized the minds, therefore the life of the world—have always been persecuted as the enemies of the upper class. Many of them have been imprisoned and tortured, all of them menaced, some burned at the stake.

#### DANGEROUS TOLERANCE.

And now, ladies and gentlemen this is not only past history, this is the record of our present time, these things are going on now, not as openly as before but not less destructively. Our country of the brave and the free is the one most haunted by the parasites of society. While France, Italy, and even Spain and Portugal, are fast liberating themselves of these enemies of the real happiness and purity of society, this common menace for the highest ideals of our fatherland grows worse and worse every year. And the only reason for this alarming fact is: We have not kept watch over our public schools, we have been too easy-going, too liberal, too tolerant. I believe in tolerance, but there is a limit; you do not tolerate in your home the libertine, the criminal or anybody who endangers the peace and happiness of your family, and you should not tolerate the enemy of the free public school to become the warden of our free institution. Ideas do not hurt as long as they are kept privately. If somebody believes in vegetarianism, that is his entirely private matter; but if he would make his view a pretext for going into your garden and laying hands on your private property, appropriating your vegetables, you would fight his kind of vegetarianism as ruinous for your garden; the same would take place if he would bring in a law depriving you of the control over your garden under the pretext that you were not believing in his species of vegetarianism. If a man believes he is the Czar of Russia, the thing is harmless as long as he keeps this under the q. t., but as soon as he tries to force you to do him homage you call the doctor and the police. If we notice that a band of Italians believe they are set by some Jewish deity Jehovah as the Cardinals and one of them as the Pope of the world, with absolute power to rule and lord this round planet on the strength of a book that contains childish conceptions of a half-civilized people, and that these priests shall have control of the education of all the children;—if we notice that the more privileges we give to these parasites the bolder they get, the more tolerant we are towards the endangerers of the peace and happiness of this nation, the more intolerant they become towards us, then—I say—then it behooves us to wake up, to become men, to fight off these enemies of our free institutions, and keep a vigilant watch over our public schools, the dearest treasure of a civilized nation.

To show you the objects of the Romans which they will certain-

ly accomplish if we let them do so, I shall quote a few sayings of Catholic prelates, most of them will have been heard by you before. Msg. Capal: "The time is not far away when the Roman Catholic Church of the Republic of the U. S. at the order of the Pope will refuse to pay its school tax, and will send bullets to the breast of government agents rather than pay it. It will come as quick as the click of a trigger, and will be obeyed, of course, as coming from God himself." Pope Pius IX: "Church and State should be united. The Roman Catholic religion should be the only religion of the state, and all other religions should be excluded by force." Cardinal McClosky: "We must take part in the elections, move in a solid mass in every state against the party pledged to sustain the integrity of the public schools." Father Walker: "I would as soon administer sacrament to a dog as to Catholics who send their children to public schools." Father Phelan: "I frankly confess that the Catholics stand before the country as the enemies of the public schools." Father Schaner: "The public schools have so far produced nothing but a godless generation of thieves and blackguards." (Now, my friends, you who have attended public schools, now you know what you are.)

Pope Pius IX says: "Education outside the Catholic Church is a damnable heresy." The Catholic World writes: "Education must be controlled by Catholic authorities, even to war and bloodshed."

These are words of the Catholics themselves, no Catholic will deny that they set forward the spirit that prevails in the church, that the archbishop in regular intervals circulates messages and has them read from the pulpit condemning the free public school system and demanding that all education should be under the control of Rome (the place where the band of Italian impostors keeps their headquarters.)

#### WATCH THE GROUND HOG.

Why should we, the friends of the free public school, indulge in indifference while our enemies are working indefatigably? Let us open the eyes of our neighbors, friends and shop-mates for this poisonous undermining of our free institutions. Call the attention of all to the institution of the Catholic Knights of Columbus, backed by the Federation of Catholic societies and aided powerfully by the papal press. Even in family papers like the Saturday Evening Post, which the public looks at as a harmless non-religious paper, we find articles inspired by Catholic fanatics. The issue of December 14, 1912, of the above named paper contains an article headed "Expensive Free Education," which is written to impress the readers with the thought that the free school system is bad. As a model man this article introduces a laboring man who does not applaud when the commencement day orators refer to "Our glorious free-school system." As objection to the public school the Saturday Evening Post finally gives "The lack of uniformity of text-books." The same Catholic power which inspired this article, fought in Missouri, Wisconsin, and other states,



bills that were brought in in favor of free school books and uniformity of the same.

The Catholic hierarchy, while they utterly condemn the public school system and declare that everyone who sends his children there to commits an unpardonable sin, at the same time seek to have their tools elected members of the school board. For what reason? To improve or to destroy the public schools? We demand that our schools shall be consigned to the *care of their friends and not their enemies*, to the supervision of those who will help them rather than to those who would glorify in their destruction!!

The Catholics are pointing out the defects of the public school system not with the object of improving upon them, but to advertise their own private schools, taught by half-educated nuns.

#### CLERICAL GRAFT.

In the same degree as the public education gets under control of Rome, the Catholic graft increases. Mr. J. Crowley, who—induced by inherited prejudice, education and early surroundings—became Catholic priest, but as soon as he, getting on the inside, seeing the terrible corruption and graft, tried to reform the church in his limits and consequently was driven out of the church, has published a book, "Romanism a Menace to the Nation," in which he has given out facts about the graft of the priests, who are ex-officio principals of the parochial schools. He describes fifty-eight different kinds of graft committed on living and dead, showing that the "holy fathers" are very resourceful. Among these different kinds the School Book Graft, School Funds Graft, are most noteworthy and suggest what will be done if these grafting priests who, without doubt, are experts in obtaining money under false pretenses and by innumerable nefarious methods, get more influence over our public school. In Milwaukee, where two years ago the Catholics succeeded in electing several members of the school board, Catholic influence attempted deposing the much-merited, able and honest Chief Truancy Officer, Hasso Pestalozzi, seemingly without reason. At the hearing before the committee Mr. Pestalozzi was charged of bad judgment in making appointments. Then it was charged that a Catholic priest had tried to induce the chief truancy officer, by threats and bribes, to appoint his relative on the staff. The honest refusal to yield under those circumstances seemed to be the reason for the persecution of the able officer who, after the facts had been investigated, was honorably cleared. The Catholics attempted this while being in a small minority. *What will they do if they gain more control?* They will do on a larger scale what they are doing now on a small scale. Already they are obtaining public funds for Roman Catholic schools and charitable (?) institutions. In the near future they intend to compel non-Catholic politicians in the municipal, state and federal governments to pass laws granting public funds to all said schools and institutions. Will honest, courageous citizens of our nation, lovers of our independence

and freedom, stand by and see it done? Against parasites tolerance is a bad policy. Our nation must be cleansed of them.

#### RESULTS OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION.

Every student of history knows that Spain, Portugal, Mexico, Italy, France, or any country where they had full control over the education of the young, are monumental memorials of Catholic education. In every one of these countries the intellectual standard has fallen below any of the neighboring people, and morally the priests' education has depraved every nation they laid a hand on. People who, before the church entered their borders, marched on top of the nations have been entirely ruined intellectually and morally by Catholic education; and the statistics of prisons prove the result of this poisonous—because insane—system on the minds of the young. Historical and statistical facts cannot be denied. Anyone acquainted with children whose education has been merely parochial school education knows that these children are very inadequately instructed in purely secular knowledge and the children of the public school enter upon the duties of life incomparably better informed and trained. The education of Catholic children being based on an artificial foundation, instead of a real, natural one, must prove an intellectual failure. And what about the ethical benefit? The religious training which the children of parochial schools receive is simply hypocritical, and instead of being the foundation of sound morality its logical effect is utter demoralization and corruption of the child. The press and reports of prisons reveal the gross immorality of priests, who are the principals of the parochial schools, though ninety-five per cent of crimes of priests are hushed up for the honor of the church. But—even aside from that—practice and precept do not go together except where precept contains more fanatic hatred or mental stupefaction than sound morals. How do you like this kind of instruction: "Children, if a priest should tell you that your hand is marble, and an angel should tell you your hand is flesh, you must believe the priest and disbelieve the angel."

Parochial school children have their moral sense blunted by being taught that God will eternally damn the Catholic who exposes a bad priest. The children see in this instruction a scheme to check sin. Nuns tell the children stories of how terrible things had befallen Catholics who had talked about bad priests.

The pernicious influence of church fairs upon school children is just now being revealed before the state legislature of Wisconsin, which is considering a bill which shall forbid sale of liquors in school halls. It is not possible to go into all details of demoralization of children through Catholic schools in a small leaflet like this. The main reason for the fact that far the greatest number of criminals have been educated in parochial schools must be sought in the misrepresentation of the universe and the laws that guide it. Intellectual errors always result in a confusion of mind, and confused minds are the easiest victims of criminal temptations. Now, do we want this



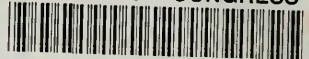
dangerous influence of the Catholic church on the intellect and morals of children extended upon our public school?

FALSE PATRIOTISM.

The Catholic danger is not the only danger that confronts the education of our young children. In conjunction with the church there is going on a propaganda of a false patriotism. We are all in favor of a true patriotism, we want our children taught to love and respect our country and its people, to love all nature, love our creeks and rivers, our hills and forests, our trees and flowers, and especially love and respect every man, woman and child. But that is not what these false patriots try to inculcate into the hearts of our children; they try to implant a passion impregnated with a hatred and contempt for other nations, a lust of murder, an idolatry of the flag. The great Dr. Johnson once said: "The coward hides behind the flag," and wherever the flag is destined to blind reason and sentiment of due consideration for others into a Jingo-patriotism, into an unreasonable devotion to the interest of a small commercial class, there we have entered dangerous ground; the history is a monumental reminder of the fact that false pseudo patriotism and religious fanaticism are the two factors that have caused all the misery in the world. The boy scout movement is one of the phenomena of this new endeavor to make our schools subservient to class interest. Even our nickel shows—if I be permitted this common denomination of these new theaters of the working men and their children, who have no money to go to expensive places of amusement—have been made places of education on these lines. Every little while we are forced—if we do not want to leave the show for which we have paid admission—to attend an unnatural scene from Mexico, Spain, Ireland or Italy, where a priest is glorified as the rescuer of a girl from vice, a plot which generally ends with an advertisement for some Catholic institution, like a cloister; or we see soldiers drilled in the art of killing, flags are enfolded and in every way the spectator is imposed upon with the idea, that to love our land and its people, means to glorify in wars and war emblems.

THE PERNICIOUS UNDERCURRENT.

Our universities and colleges, in fact all our public places of learning, are being terrorized into teaching and misrepresenting facts along these tendencies. A few days ago Prof. Duncan of the Chicago University was roasted in all the pulpits and from all the papers for simply stating in a lecture the scientific facts of evolution rejecting the story of the creation as set forth by Genesis. Even State Superintendents of Public Instruction have found it useful for their political schemes to denounce free public institutions and to advertise private sectarian colleges. Our text-books are more misrepresentation, and distortion, of facts than statements of them. Take it all in all: There is a tendency of systematic poisoning the minds of the young for certain selfish purposes that is the greatest menace our nation has ever confronted.



## THE OUTLOOK.

But we are on the eve of an educational awakening. The absolute necessity of a complete reorganization, reshaping, reconception of education and the educational system is pressing upon all who think. This awakening is due to the influence of modern science and the exigencies of inevitable social change. In this peaceful, but determined revolution, you and I, every one of us must co-operate. We must resist the attempts of Rome and all other influences who endanger our schools. Negligence or indulgence here is destructive.

Before all we must demand that in our educational system the individuality and independence of every child must be guaranteed. Nothing should be imposed upon children, but they should be taught to think for themselves, to rely upon the light of reason, of observation and experience, should be taught to use all their senses. They should not be made to accept anything, because some great man or Hocuspocus has said so, but because they have acknowledged a fact after observation and investigation, using their own reason, and not the reason of some old dreamer who lived in a half-barbaric age. They shall be so educated that they hate cringing, or crawling, or bending their foreheads to the earth, that they rather stand fearlessly erect and look openly into this vast unwall'd temple of the universe, star-gemmed and luminous with millions of suns and planets.

They should be educated to usefulness. Their lives should not be wasted in the acquisition of the useless. The only object shall be to make them capable of making themselves and others happy.

In our schools nothing should be taught that the teacher does not actually know, and can prove. Beliefs, superstitions, mere theories, should not be treated like demonstrated facts. Our text-books must be expurgated from all misrepresentations and myths. Truth and nothing but truth is the foundation and the superstructure of the dome of a higher civilization. Truth gives man the greatest power for good. Truth is sword and shield. Truth is the sacred light of the soul.

And now, I fervently appeal to you, fathers and mothers, for the sake of your dear children, young men and women for the sake of your young brothers and sisters, lovers of mankind for the sake of the future of our dear land and its people, I appeal to all who enjoy our advanced stage of civilization for the sake of humanity, join us to be on the outlook, keep watch over our free public schools!!

Our schools shall be made the real temples, our teachers the true priests, knowledge propagated, superstition ridiculed! Then our life will not have been lived in vain, but we shall be in truth living elements of the evolution of mankind towards perfection, we shall stand for some good purpose, fight for some sacred cause and will prove real, true patriots, the real lovers of our country and its people, the builders of a higher civilization.

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